

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSM-03 /059 W
-----260553Z 104322 /22

R 251449Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5419
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: DAYAN-BEGIN DISCUSSIONS

1. IN RECENT DAYS THE PRESS HAS REPORTED MEETINGS BETWEEN MOSHE DAYAN AND LIKUD LEADER MENACHEM BEGIN. THE LAST SUCH MEETING OCCURRED MARCH 24 IN A TEL AVIV HOSPITAL WHERE BEGIN IS UNDERGOING MEDICAL TESTS. (COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND THAT BEGIN RETURNED FROM HIS RECENT CANADA/ U.S. VISIT "VERY TIRED" AND HAS SOME "DIGESTIVE" PROBLEMS. ONE REPORT SAYS HE IS SUFFERING FROM STOMACH POISONING.)

2. SEPCULATION CENTERS ON DAYAN JOINING THE LIKUD OR (MORE PLAUSIBLY) HEADING SOME SORT OF "NATIONAL FRONT" TO INCLUDE THE LIKUD AND ARIK SHARON'S SHLOMZION. LESSER LIGHTS WHO ARE INCLUDED IN THESE RUMORS ARE LABOR MK AMOS HADAR (RAFI) AND MK MORDECHAI BEN-PORAT, WHO RECENTLY RESIGNED FROM THE LABOR PARTY. THE COMMON BOND SEEN AMONG THESE PERSONALITIES IS A HARD LINE OF WEST BANK RETROCESSION.

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3. DAYAN, WHO LAST MONTH SUFFERED A REBUFF AT THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION WHEN HE TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO STIFFEN THE LANGUAGE OF THE PLATFORM REGARDING THE WEST BANK, HAS THUS FAR DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER HE WILL BE ACTIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN. HE ALSO REFUSES TO COMMENT OF THE MEETINGS WITH BEGIN.

4. COMMENT: A LIKUD CONTACT HAS INFORMED US THAT DAYAN INITIATED THESE MEETINGS WITH BEGIN. THIS CONTACT DISMISSED THE REPORTS, SEEN IN SOME NEWSPAPERS, THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS DEALT EXCLUSIVELY WITH SECURITY PROBLEMS AND A REVIEW OF FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPTS. HE ASSERTED THAT THE TALKS WERE ENTIRELY POLITICAL. HE NOTED THAT DAYAN HAS UNTIL MARCH 30 TO MAKE UP HIS MIND WHETHER TO JOIN LIKUD BECAUSE THE LIKUD LIST WILL BE DRAWN UP ON THAT DATE.

4. IN A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT VEIN, A JOURNALIST WHO IS A FRIEND OF DAYAN HAS TOLD US THAT DAYAN IS NOT LIKELY TO LEAVE LABOR BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, WILL KEEP HIS PARTICIPATION IN LABOR'S CAMPAIGN TO A MINIMUM. HE ADMITS THE POLLIBILITY THAT DAYAN IS FOSTERING TALK OF HIS FLIRTATION WITH THE LIKUD IN ORDER TO SCARE LABOR INTO MAKING HIM SOME KIND OF AN OFFER TO KEEP HIM IN THE PARTY. OUR JOURNALIS SOURCE ALSO CONCEDES THAT DAYAN AS A VOTE-GETTER IS NOT WORTH MORE THAN A MODEST PRICE, BECAUSE MANY ISRAELIS CONTINUE TO HOLD HIM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEAVY CASUALTIES IN THE YOM KIPPUR WAR. THIS LAST POINT WAS CONFIRMED TO US BY JEWISH AGENCY CHAIRMAN JOSEF ALMOGI IN A CONVERSATION TODAY. ALMOGI ALSO THOUGHT THAT DAYAN WOULD "PRETTY MUCH SIT OUT THIS CAMPAIGN."
DUNNIGAN

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